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RELIGIOUS EMOTION.

By H. B. WOOLSTON.

Religion has been studied heretofore almost exclusively from the standpoints of history and of metaphysics. To these methods of procedure the recent interest in comparative religion has brought encouraging innovation. For only too long has the validity of a natural and universal sentiment been made dependent upon the historicity of certain documents, supposed to report the supernatural revelation of a particular faith, and upon the ability of a system of theology to demonstrate the finality of its dogma in the face of developing thought. Undoubtedly the historic origin of religious belief is of great importance in the study of its development. But who will tell us when we have come upon its first appearance? Surely the theoretical reconstruction of the primitive mind by latter-day philosophers betrays difficulties in the way of philogenesis, and the painstaking quarrels of historic critics should be a warning in the same direction. But whatever may have been the origin of religion, the fact that such a manifestation now exists is perfectly patent. No one can deny that there are millions of men all over the world who claim to hold religious faith, and who act in certain ways in evidence of this faith. Here, then, is a perfectly well established scientific fact:—religious faith does exist. Moreover, this faith manifests itself in certain phenomena that may be studied by us here and now. Therefore, just as the laboratory work of a student in modern biological science is considered of more importance for gaining a comprehension of the phenomena of life, than is mere acquaintance with the history of theories on the subject; so it seems to me that the study of the ontogenesis of religious faith by the collection and comparison of data from original and living sources, is of more importance for an understanding of the religious dynamic, than is labored exegesis or devotion to the history of dogma. By such method we may at least learn something new about religion, and escape the dreariness of mere philosophic comment. And perhaps, when we better understand how religion works in life, we may more wisely direct its activities.

Religion may be studied genetically from several points of view. Socially, religion manifests itself in ceremonies of the

cult and in certain institutional forms of activity. Intellectually, it has taken form in a body of more or less philosophical propositions called dogmas. But both these expressions in word and deed are objective, and more or less external to the real source of religious life. For modes of religious activity alter with changing civilizations, and systems of religious philosophy depend upon the intellectual culture of the people and of the time in which they appear. The constant element behind all these expressions is the religious experience as a fact of the inner life. This is the source of all external manifestations; this is the constant center from which spring divergent expressions. Since men's minds are essentially the same, if we can find what are the functional activities that express themselves in religious phenomena, we shall have the key to the explanation of the latter. For, as Dean Mansel says, "Whether the relation of man to God be primarily presented to the human mind in the form of knowledge, or of feeling, or of practical impulse, it can be given only as a mode of consciousness, subject to those conditions under which alone consciousness is possible. Whatever knowledge is imparted, whatever impulse is communicated, whatever feeling is excited in man's mind must take place in a manner adapted to the constitution of its human recipient, and must exhibit such characteristics as the laws of that constitution impose upon it."¹ Religion for us, then, is a fact of inner experience to be described in terms of psychic activity, and to be explained according to the laws of our mind's functioning. For this purpose we shall use as our tool the analysis that psychology supplies, reducing the elements, so far as we can, to terms of physiology, in order that the results may be made as objective as possible.

From this delimitation of our problem it is clear that we cannot consider the social side of religion. It is undoubtedly the case that the social environment of the individual has the greatest influence upon him, both in determining the character of his ultimate standard of life, and in directing his activities in striving toward his ideal. The *rôle* that imitation plays in the formation of character has been amply shown by Tarde and Baldwin. Moreover, on the intellectual side, there are certain phases of religious faith that we cannot discuss here. Such are,—the content and the logical relation of the ideas that accompany religious experience. A train of ideas necessarily accompanies such experience; but it is clear that the character and relation of these ideas will vary according to the nature of the individual's past experience. Such intellectual content must be assumed in the experience, else the activity would

¹ Limits of Religious Thought, p. 92-93.

have no sign to mark it off as religious. But it is not this side of the matter that interests us here. What we want to describe is the inner face of the experience; and, so far as we are able, the physiological machinery through which it is mediated.

Now it must not be supposed that we are confusing the experience as *inwardly felt*, with the processes of its functioning as *objectively described*. True, it is the same activity; but to the person who experiences it, the religious emotion has a value quite different from that in the mind of the observer, who merely analyzes its manifestations as a type of psycho-physical phenomena. Moreover, as to the nature and existence of the objects of religious worship, we have nothing to say. That is a matter for the epistemologist and the theologian. Our business is with the inner experience, as such. In short, our problem is to give some account of certain emotions that have religious reference.

First, however, we must give some account of the emotions in general, in order that we may have clearly in mind just that phase of psychic activity with which we have to deal. There are several theories as to the nature of the emotions, but most of them agree so far: (1) An emotion is the inward feel of an experience, the peculiarly personal sense of an activity. (2) An emotion is the psychic resonance accompanying certain trains of ideas and certain bodily activities.

In the affective life an emotion corresponds roughly to a train of associated ideas in the intellectual realm. That is, an emotion is more than a mere sensation. To use a figure, an emotion is not a point, but a line of pretty definite form. On the other hand, an emotion is less completely organized than a sentiment, which may be considered as a fairly constant state of feeling corresponding to a well established intellectual attitude assumed in the face of certain situations. Perhaps it may be thought that in consideration of this last definition we should have done better had we started out to treat of the "religious sentiment." But what we shall have to say on the lack of co-ordination in the average religious experience may justify our use of the middle term.

The main point in debate among the psychologists is as to the relation of emotions to bodily expressions. James and Lange hold that the body reacts in a certain way to a given stimulus, that the mind feels this state of tension or relaxation, and that this feeling is the emotion. The older psychologists hold that the mind feels in a certain way immediately upon receiving an internal or external excitation, and subsequently expresses its emotional state by nervous discharges. Neither of the theories gives a very intelligent account as to why the emotion expresses itself in just the way it does. Perhaps the

explanation of Professor Dewey would help out both at this point. He suggests (according to the first law of Darwin) that the nervous energies follow those channels which have been built up by the experience of the race in performing actions originally useful. As to the question at issue, it seems clear that genetically the physiological reaction does precede. Logically, however, the inner feel of an emotional stimulation must be appreciated, before the physiological accompaniments can be interpreted by the individual concerned, as expressions of his mental state. This doubtless is the point emphasized by the older psychologists. Personally, I should presume that it is the matter of sequence which Professor James is emphasizing, and not the identification of an emotion with its mere physiological accompaniments. At least the former point seems to me the only proper one for discussion. But if this interpretation be incorrect, and there is a more real dichotomy of mind and body involved in the views, then the remarks of Mr. Ribot apply. He says, both these theories are implicitly dualistic; one insisting on the causality of the physiological element, the other urging the precedence of the spiritual principle. But as a matter of fact, we know nothing of either element apart from the other. "*Ce que les mouvements de la face et du corps, les troubles vaso-moteurs, respiratoires, sécrétoires expériment objectivement, les états de conscience corrélatifs que l'observation intérieure classe suivant leurs qualités, l'expriment subjectivement: c'est un seul et même événement tradint dans deux langues.*"¹ We do not say that physiology is psychology, any more than we should be inclined to assert that the inside of a bucket is the outside. But just as the changes in a muscle may be expressed in terms of chemistry or described as physiological action, so it seems to me the working of the human mind can be expressed in terms of psychology or in those of physiology. Such at least seems to be the practical assumption of most alienists.

But leaving the vexed question as to nature of the interrelation of mind and body, the intimate connection between states of body and states of mind is universally recognized. I quote from Nahlowsky:² "*Wie innig das Gemüthsleben mit der Verfassung und Entwicklung des Organismus zusammenhängt, zeigt der Umstand, dass leibliche Gesundheit oder Krankheit, Geschlecht, Nahrungsweise, meteorologische Einflüsse, Tages- und Jahreszeit, ja selbst die Lage des Körpers (also sämtlich Verhältnisse, welche direct die Leiblichkeit betreffen), mehr oder minderauch auf das Gemüthsleben ihren Einfluss üben.*"

¹ *Psychologie des sentiments*, p. 113.

² *Gefühlsleben*, s. 52.

The effects of alcoholic stimulation upon the emotions is a commonplace phenomenon. But on the other hand, the effect of the mind on the body is no less strong and immediate. Lange's *Gemüthsbewegungen* contains some excellent descriptions. The sight of a bear may be sufficient to cause my hair to stand on end, my eyes to stare, my jaw to drop. The blood leaves my face, my throat grows dry, my breathing is interrupted, my heart first stops and then pounds furiously, my abdominal viscera are relaxed, my limbs tremble, and a chill runs over my whole body. Two lines on a postal card announcing the death of a dear friend may throw me into a paroxysm of weeping and lower my bodily energies for many days. Just what this intimate connection between mind and body means we do not know. Personally, I think it means that *mind* and *body* are two terms used to express the activities of a unitary organism whose functions are regarded from stand-points designated by these words. Such a statement may merely dodge the difficulty involved in discussing the problem of interrelation. It at least avoids the suspicion of multiplying hypostases.

A word must be said as to the relation of the emotions to the process of ideation. When a stimulus affects the body there is a tendency to react immediately in a manner suitable to the structure of the organism. But if the situation cannot be met at once the afferent nerves transmit the feel of the matter to the brain. Here, in the neural switch-board of the body, the stimulus and answering impulse are thrown into relation with nerve currents reporting sensations and projective tendencies in other parts of the organism. All these partial impulses tend to fuse in a manner suitable to the nervous organization, usually over a resultant path found advantageous in the past experience of the individual. If this fusion be easily effected and the impulses reinforce each other, there will be comparatively slight consciousness of the resulting activity. But if there be a conflict between the tendencies, the organism is put to it to co-ordinate them or else be disrupted. In this way the situation is made objective, so to speak, to the organism as a whole. The partial activities must be turned into a larger circuit, and a new activity found. The perceiving of this more comprehensive activity is what we call the "imaging" or associative function of the mind. On the affective side, the feel of the energies that are welling up to be discharged in this larger activity is the emotion. Hence it will be seen that ideas must always accompany emotions, for the latter are only the resonance of the unco-ordinated forces that push the former into objectivity. It will also be seen, that as our ideas become far-seeing and our co-ordinations complete, there will be less emo-

tion, since there will be less internal friction to arouse affective resonance.

That religion on its inner side is a matter of feeling will scarcely be questioned. The work of Schleiermacher was to show this very clearly. He reduced religion in its essence to the feeling of absolute dependence. We should scarcely agree that this is a complete statement, but we cannot doubt that emotions such as fear, hope and joy play an important part in the development of the religious life. Perhaps the emotional element in religion will be sufficiently clear from a single quotation from von Hartmann.¹ He says, "Alle wesentlichen Momente des religiösen Processes gestalten sich zu psychologischen Zuständen, die wir nur als Gefühle zu bezeichnen vermögen; die Demuth der Endlichkeit vor dem Unendlichen, die Gottesfurcht, die der religiösen Weisheit Anfang ist, die Sehnsucht des Hertzens nach dem Göttlichen und seinem Besitz, diese folgenschwere Bewusstseinresonanz des noch mehr oder minder unbewussten religiösen Triebes, das gläubige Vertrauen auf Gott und die selbstsverleugnende Hingebung der ganzen Persönlichkeit an ihn, die Qualen des Schuldbewusstseins und der Reue, die Verzweiflung des gottentfremdeten und mit Gott zerfallenen Bewusstseins, das Empfinden der von Gott gewährten Erlösung als einer wahr 'Erlösung,' das Durchkosten der tiefsten Erschütterung und der befreienden Erhebung, die Seligkeit der Versöhnung, die Gluthen der weltentrückten Andacht und die innere Sabbathstille des Gottesfriedens, dies und alles sonst nach zu Nennende sind ohne Zweifel nach psychologischer Klassifikation Gefühle." We do not intend to give a descriptive analysis of all these emotions in their religious bearing, but merely to present some account of how the more constant phases of religious emotion arise, how they manifest themselves, and what is their relation to bodily conditions.

First, let us see how religious feeling arises and develops in the individual. The religion of childhood and of primitive peoples is summed up pretty nearly in—fear of an external power, and hope of its assistance to overcome the disagreeable features of life. But with the growth of self-consciousness, there develops the sense of a more spiritual personal relation to the world about one. For as a man's sense of self develops, there necessarily accompanies it a perception of the not-self with which it is contrasted. And hence the necessity of establishing a working harmony between the two arises. Or perhaps it would be more nearly correct to say that a man's feeling of personality increases as, by growing knowledge of his

¹ Religions-philosophie, Bd. II, s. 28-29.

environment, he is led to relate himself to the system of things in which he is placed. It is clear that both sides of this relation develop together. The perception of such relation and the endeavor of the individual to satisfy his wants in accordance with the laws of the world about him, reveals to him a hierarchy of powers within himself. That is, the satisfaction of some impulses does not give the same complete and lasting result for him as does the satisfaction of others. Consequently the individual is led to set a higher estimate upon activities of the latter sort. It is found that the activities which effect a lasting satisfaction for the organism as a whole have greater worth than those which attain the ends of a partial impulse or a merely temporary desire. Thus the individual is led to identify himself with the most comprehensive processes rather than with partial manifestations, and to set up as his ideal the satisfaction that arises from complete functioning of all his powers. And so a scale of values is established in the mind of the individual. For as his various activities express his whole personality more or less completely, they are recognized as good or bad for him. Here, then, is a personal ideal without as yet any very clear ethical content.

But at the same time, the society in which the individual finds himself, prescribes that this ideal be of a certain type, and that the activities put forth in realizing it shall be directed along certain general lines. The principal feature about such a socialized ideal is its communal character. That is, the individual must not pursue his own selfish ends in a manner counter to the good of the group as a whole, but must realize himself as a member of the society, and must seek to advance the general welfare. This is a still larger ideal, which relates the individual to the social system, as his partial impulses are related to the development of his own personality. Certain activities of the individual that promote the common welfare are called "good," others that run counter to the functional activity of the group are termed "bad." The individual, by education and imitation is led to adopt this standard as his own, and to make it the test of his activities. Here morality appears.

But once more, the leaning of the group presents to the individual a certain *weltanschauung*, in which good and evil spirits or a personal cosmic principle are pretty sure to have an important place. The individual is supposed to sustain a relation to this cosmic society, just as he does to his own social group. Such relations are interpreted rather closely after the analogy of the code of the group; but the regulations of this cosmic society usually transcend those of the earthly community, and may even contravene group *mores*. Such, for in-

stance, is the case of human sacrifice in societies where man-slaughter is proscribed. In this cosmic relationship, we have the largest whole to which the individual can relate himself. Consequently the law of this comprehensive order (interpreted as the will of God), is made the ultimate standard for all activities. It must not be supposed that this standard is an absolutely fixed one. It is rather the outermost ring of a developing view of life, such as we have attempted to trace schematically in the two preceding sections. A sense of this larger ethical and religious responsibility seems to develop at about the age of puberty. It is about this time that most conversions occur,¹ that confirmation is celebrated, and that the rites of initiation into the social life of the group are performed.²

The appreciation of this ultimate standard brings with it certain added responsibilities to the individual. He brings his personality to the test of this larger ideal, and estimates the worth of his activities by their place in the higher co-ordination. Hence any conflicts between his activities and what he conceives to be the universal order (interpreted as realizing the will of God), is felt as a sense of sin. The more persistent partial impulses that are likely to drag him off from striving toward this more general end are regarded as evil. And thus a dualism is often established between the lower animal desires and the more intellectualized tendencies (the "flesh" and the "spirit"), or even between the entire present order and the idealized system (the "world" and "heaven"). The consciousness of such an inconsistency leads to a state of inner tension that must be relieved by the perception of a new synthesis and the discharge of partial activities in a larger co-ordination. The solution of the situation is perhaps most strikingly illustrated in what is termed in evangelical Christian churches, conversion. And to a consideration of this phase of religious development we now turn.

Leuba³ and Starbuck⁴ have so well described this crisis in the spiritual life, that we can do little more than summarize their treatment. The sense of inward dualism that we have just described is heightened by depicting the hideousness of sin and its ultimate punishment. On the other hand, the blessedness of following the will of God is emphasized by numerous testimonies. The individual is led to identify all his partial, lower and selfish desires with an evil self; whereas his higher and more generous impulses are attributed to a gracious spirit

¹ Starbuck: *Psychology of Religion*.

² Daniels: *The New Life, Amer. Jour. of Psy.*, Vol. VI.

³ Study of the Psychology of Religious Phenomena, *Amer. Jour. of Psy.*, Vol. VII.

⁴ *Op. cit.*

pleading within him. The figure of Jesus is pointed to as the realization of the unity between God and man, and his acceptance as a saviour urged. The emotional power of music, reiterated appeal from the pulpit, the example of others, the pleading of friends are added, until the emotional pitch often becomes intense. The ideas in the mind at such a time are restricted in number, and being constantly emphasized, come to possess it with almost hypnotic force. There is often great mental anguish and bodily disorder at such a time. Finally the individual can stand the tension no longer. He yields to what he believes is the will of God—that is, he identifies himself with the more comprehensive unity. He breaks with the narrower co-ordination of activities that has hitherto bounded his life, and throws himself into the “great sweep of things.” He is no longer the main center of the universe, but has his place in its spiritual system. The individual’s will now being in harmony with God’s will, and all his activities co-ordinated in a comprehensive scheme, he proceeds in life with new confidence. There is often a sense of newness and change after conversion, since the lately acquired co-ordination is not the one that has heretofore been identified with the self. There is frequently also a feeling of joy and strength, due doubtless to relief from tension and a new redistribution of nervous energy. We are well aware that such a description applies to a particular form of religious life, and that there are others wherein no such striking transformation is effected. But, nevertheless, it seems to be the case that the acceptance of religious belief marks the process of relating activities to a larger scheme of life. Such a co-ordination may come as a matter of gradual growth, or be marked as a crisis relieving a conflict of tendencies.

The recurrence of periods of doubt mark less pronounced manifestations of this essential process. The conflict here is generally of a less radical intellectual sort, and usually arises from the failure of the accredited religious *weltanschauung* to comprise and harmonize certain additional views or experiences of life. Here again the emotional tension may be great. The “old self” is identified with the accepted statement or customary form of activity, the “new self” with the broader view. The incorporation of the limited form of functioning into that recognized to be more comprehensive again gives relief and freshness. The stress of feeling in such periods is not generally due to distrust of the religious desire as such, but rather to dissatisfaction with the limitations of its accepted forms of expression.

There are certain types of religious life and thought in which the emotional element has asserted itself to an unusual

degree. This is especially the case in mysticism. The mystic is not satisfied to repose on any external authority, but would rise to a vision of God himself and hear the divine word within his own heart. "Pour cela, il est nécessaire qu'il fournisse une préparation convenable; afin de s'élever aux choses du ciel, il faut que l'esprit se soit détaché de celles de la terre, et en outre qu'il se soit à la fois affiné et purifié par les austérités, la jeûne, les prières; d'autant plus que cet état cause des hallucinations, une prédisposition à l'inspiration. Si l'excitation est très grande et procure une sorte d'hystérie, l'esprit sera tout prêt à recevoir cette visite d'en haut. Elle viendra et l'homme sera inspiré, prophétisera, verra les esprits supérieurs, portera sur son corps les stigmates résultant de l'imitation par la volonté; il communiquera directement et extraordinairement avec Dieu."¹ It is true that this is a description of an exaggerated form of mysticism, but nevertheless of one that has been common to that tendency. The mystic goes apart from his fellow men, and seeks to find by absorption in the contemplation of God that unity which he feels is lacking in his life. The assertion of the common animal impulses is a temptation of the devil. The mystic would leave the prison house of his body, and rest in soul-to-soul communion with God. The exclamation of Maine de Biran—"Mon Dieu, délivrez-moi du mal, c'est-à-dire de *cet état du corps* qui offusque et absorbe toutes les facultés de mon âme"—is characteristic of a certain sort of mystic, and seems to point to a physiological origin of this tendency, *i. e.*, unharmonized functions striving for a point of unity and support.² Moreover, fixing the attention upon a limited number of ideas produces a state of emotion that corresponds to the nature of those ideas. This is the basis of the discipline of Loyola. This sort of self-hypnosis may lead even to an identification of the individual with the ideal form that absorbs his mind. In this way we may explain cases of stigmata. All stimuli are apt to be interpreted in the light of the controlling idea. Hence the frequency of illusions and hallucinations among mystics. It is highly probable that the organism of a saint, made sensitive by fasts and vigils, will respond readily to stimuli that would not affect a person in the ordinary condition. And it is very likely that many abnormal states of feeling will be objectively referred to spiritual causes.³ If ecstasy or visions are of frequent recurrence or are accompanied by disease, we may expect to find a pathological condition as their immediate cause. Ste. Theresa, whose visions were most

¹ Grasserie: De la psychologie des religieux, p. 262.

² Murisier: Le sentiment religieux dans l'extase, Rev. Phil., '98. Charbonnier: Maladies des mystiques.

³ See Joly: Psychologie des saintes, ch. 3.

numerous, is known to have been epileptoid. However, we may not say that because men are susceptible to stimuli that we cannot appreciate, they are therefore abnormal in the bad sense of the word. Nor may we hold that a spiritual truth is useless because it was first discovered by a man whose mind was particularly sensitive in that direction.

There are two stages of mystic communion generally recognized by those who treat of this subject. The first is characterized by the perception of voices and visions, such as we have indicated. The second stage is that of ecstasy, or complete communion with God. This *ravissement* is often accompanied by motor impotence and sensory anæsthesia, so that there may be a feeling of levitation, or the soul may be felt to be exalted above the body.¹ It is an expansive feeling in which the distinction between the *me* and the *not me* is broken down, and the soul is wrapped in the Absolute. There comes a sense of oneness with God, untroubled by visions, unperplexed by obtruding ideas, which feels no fever of restless moral striving, but which is as a thrilling silence, as the throbbing of hearts in unison.² Since this stage is marked by the absence of clear ideas it cannot well be described in objective terms, but must be felt.³ Sometimes the ecstasy is compared with the embraces of a consummated love. It will be seen that the emotional side of such *rapprochement* is very intense, whereas the intellectual and active phases are practically suppressed. It is all an inward quiver. There is another stage in the mystical development which brings it to its logical conclusion. It is simply "*anéantissement complet*," nirvana. There is no thought, feeling or action. Unconsciousness ensues, and the sense of personality is lost—"swallowed up in the Infinite."

The tendency of an emotional form of religion to adopt the practices of asceticism is well known. "They [ascetic practices] have been by all people adopted for the purpose of bringing on those abnormal states which are supposed to imply either possession by spirits or communion with spirits. Savages fast that they may have dreams, and obtain the supernatural guidance which they think dreams give to them; and especially among medicine men and those in training to become such, there is abstinence and submission to various privations with the view of inducing the maniacal excitement which they and those around mistake for inspiration."⁴ The purpose of asceticism is to castigate or entirely suppress the less spiritual emotions. Distracting stimuli are shut off, and the attention is

¹ See Murisier, *loc. cit.*, Comp. II Cor. 12: 1-7.

² See Ruysbroeck: *Du supreme degre de la vie interieure*.

³ See Godferneaux: *Le sentiment et la pensee*.

⁴ Spencer: *Principles of Sociology*, III, p. 91.

fixed upon religious ideas. External and internal aids are employed to keep these ever before the mind. Striking passages from the holy books are conned; physical means are used to induce the proper state of mind. Flagellation and uncomfortable clothing seem to act as stimuli, by throwing the desired religious consummation into strong contrast with present misery. Fasts are observed by many faiths, especially before great religious festivals.

Perhaps a word should be said here about so-called miraculous cures, for such cases belong undoubtedly to periods of high religious emotion. It is possible, and very probable, that under stress of high excitement, the nervous forces may be gathered to overcome a functional disorder. It may also happen that under the suggestive influence of a religious rite the sufferer may temporarily disregard the disorder which later reappears.

The matter of revivals and of religious epidemics in general belongs rather to a discussion of social psychology than to a study of the emotions of individuals. We can only say, therefore, that an emotion is re-enforced by the perception of its social manifestation. A man may be convinced, a mob goes mad with conviction.¹ Perhaps we may dismiss this side of our problem by quoting from Granger.² "There is a natural exaltation of feeling when the mind directs itself upon sublime objects, but this is too often confused with the lower kind of excitement which is produced when human beings are assembled together in a crowd. This latter . . . may be traced under the heads of contagion of feeling and hypnotic suggestion." A good or a bad emotion may thus be given momentum by gaining popular approval.

We now come to the question as to the relation of states of religious emotion to bodily conditions. From what has already been said of the emotions in general and of ascetic practices in religion, it will be seen that the relation is a very close and real one. In fact we have held that states of body and states of mind are two descriptions of the functioning of one organism as regarded from somewhat different standpoints. Emotions are not entities controlling mind and body, but certain phases of the activities of these. Such being the case, the emotional states will vary with the varying conditions of the organism. And, hence, "religious states, as well as other states of mind, stand in reciprocal relation with states of the brain and nervous system."³ As Mr. Joly says,⁴ "Il me

¹ See LeBon: *The Crowd*, Bk. I, Ch. 4.

² *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 101.

³ Coe: *The Spiritual Life*, p. 86.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 160.

(3) *The evidence of pathological conditions shows the connection between exaggerated religious emotion and diseased nervous states.* We may here remind the reader of the remarks made above under the heading of mysticism. Religious insanity has long been recognized. This is not generally attributed to devils nowadays, but is referred to a lesion or functional disorder of the brain. For a treatment of this phase of the subject we would refer to Kraft-Ebing,¹ Tuke,² Mercier,³ Vallou and Marie.⁴ We subjoin one case cited by Clouston.⁵ He records a case of melancholia caused by amenorrhœa. The patient wept causelessly and bemoaned her fate as being a castaway from God. After five months treatment the patient menstruated, and recovery was immediate. The sense of religious depression and despair vanished, and religion did not trouble her one way or the other. Dr. Clouston adds, that persons of sensitive nerves and religious training are apt to hang their depression on a religious peg or doctrinal point.

(4) *Religious emotion is increased by the use of physical stimuli.* The employment of images and eichons to make the religious ideas clearer and to arouse the emotions of love, awe and reverence, has been common in practically every religion. Consider as examples, the figures of Buddha, the crucifixes and pictures of the Passion in Romish churches. The use of music in religious worship has been almost universal. From the compositions of Handel and Bach to the war dance of the Dakotas we find the stirring effect of music employed to rouse the emotion of devotees. Perhaps such means of excitation, as well as the acts and attitudes involved in worship, may not strictly be called physical stimuli, since they lack that sort of immediate contact with an objective stimulant, which is frequently understood by the term. The forms we have mentioned, however, are doubtless physical enough in their source and in their appeal to the senses. But when we come to the use of incense and liquors to aid in exaltation, there is no doubt that physical means are being employed. The use of soma among the Hindoos to produce religious intoxication, and the inspiration of the Delphic priestess by means of inhaling gaseous fumes may be cited as instances. The use of the dance in religion to stir the feelings by rhythmic action and to express the emotions in an expansive way is well known. The whirling dervishes and the ceremonial dances of the American Indians may be noted as examples.

¹ *Psychiatrie*, s. 85, 150, 326 f, 436 f, 521, etc.

² *Dictionary of Psychological Medicine*, art. Religious Insanity, etc.

³ *Op. cit.*

⁴ *Des psychoses religieuses*, *Archives de Neurologie*, 1897.

⁵ *Mental Diseases*, p. 84 f.

In a very suggestive article in *The American Journal of Psychology* (Vol. VIII), J. H. Leuba defines the moral imperative as "a reflective, cerebro-spinal, ideo-motor process, unaccompanied (immediately) by sympathetic emotional reflexes." Hence we can understand the cold and "impersonal" character of the moral imperative, for it lacks that rich suffusion of organic sensations which we identify with the feel of our usual activities. The author suggests that the emphasis of various religions upon the "free spirit" as against the "heart of flesh," is nothing but the endeavor to keep the cerebro-spinal motor tracts free from the disturbing influence of the sympathetic system. If we comprehend all this, it is only a more psychological way of expressing what we generally admit—that those actions for which we feel a moral responsibility are those over which we exercise voluntary control; and secondly, that moral advance consists in progressively co-ordinating our blind impulses under intelligent direction. From what we have seen of the rich emotional accompaniments of religious experience, and in the light of these suggestions, we may appreciate with renewed force the psychological aptitude of Mathew Arnold's definition of religion as "morality touched with emotion." Religion thus involves the whole man; not only his well defined activities, but also the emotional presaging of larger co-ordinations that cannot yet be expressed in clear ideas or well directed effort.¹ *But the fact that intense religious emotion is accompanied by circulatory and visceral disorders,² and is marked by a paucity of clear ideas,³ seems to point to the fact that nervous energies are being dissipated in the sympathetic system, instead of being profitably co-ordinated in the ideo-motor tracts.* While the vegetative processes are good so far as they go, it will be seen that domination by them is of distinctly lower value for the individual, and particularly for society, than is the execution of well directed voluntary activity.

What, now, are our conclusions as to the nature and value of the religious emotions? First, the religious emotions are the stirring of the forces deepest in the nature of man and inherent in the very organism of the human race. Religion is the voicing of a constitutional need, just as hunger is the feeling of a constitutional need. It is the desire to maintain and perfect the personality beyond its present natural limits. The warranty for religion is thus not a matter of external authority nor of intellectual inference merely, but it is found in the very structure of man as a sentient animal. If this be to material-

¹ See Hylan: Public Worship.

² See Joly: Psychologie des Sanites, p. 164 f.; Murisier, *loc. cit.*

³ Godfernaux, *op. cit.*

ize the spiritual nature of man, it is at the same time to spiritualize all of his nature. In this connection let me quote a passage from Professor James on the emotions.¹ "They are," he says, "Sensational processes, processes due to inward currents set up by physical happenings. Such processes have, it is true, always been regarded by the platonizers in psychology as having something peculiarly base about them. But our emotions must always be inwardly what they are whatever be the physiological ground of their apparition. If they are deep, pure, worthy, spiritual facts on any conceivable theory of their physiological source, they remain no less deep, pure, spiritual and worthy of regard on this present sensational theory. They carry their own inner measure of worth with them; and it is just as logical to use the present theory of the emotions for proving that sensational processes need not be vile and material, as to use their vileness and materiality as a proof that such a theory cannot be true." For my part, I should like to see the formal dualisms and watertight compartment systems of life done with, and life made a spiritual whole. Never will the higher nature of man be made the object of exact knowledge by super-refined and unreal methods of investigation. Only by painstaking empirical study can his experiences be rightly understood, and thus a sound basis be laid for the intelligent interpretation of his higher aspirations. Let me close such an apparently materialistic paragraph with the words of another.² "Shall we therefore conclude that conversion is practically an automatic performance? Not unless we first define conversion so as to ignore its profound relation to God and to the principles of a good life. If conversion is a *moral* renewal, it is not merely a psychical process of any sort. What has been proved is simply that, when conversion or an equivalent change takes place in one's moral attitude toward life and destiny and God, it may clothe itself in certain emotional habiliments provided certain factors are present, but otherwise not. The substance of religious experiences as far transcends their emotional forms as a man transcends the clothes he wears."

Let us next inquire what the office of emotion in the religious life is. The emotions as we have seen, are merely the psychic resonance of bodily or mental activities. They indicate the presence of unco-ordinated forces, and hence are especially marked on the breaking down of an habitual activity and the formation of a new co-ordination. An emotion is thus the stirring of forces that may be directed into a new and larger

¹ Psychology, II, Ch. 25.

² Coe: *Op. cit.*, p. 140.

activity. But in themselves, the emotions may be as unmoral as a fever chill or as useless as escaping steam. It is the turning of force into intelligently directed action in accordance with the needs of the situation, that makes the dynamic of value. It is the co-ordination of the dissipated energies into a consistent scheme of development that gives them moral worth. Consequently the religious emotion as such has no value at all, except as the inward resonance shows ready response of the nature to a certain sort of influence, and except as the excitation leads to a large and worthy effort. Indeed luxuriating in religious emotion is a distinctly immoral practice, comparable with physical indulgence and dissipation. To quote from von Hartmann,¹—"Wenn die Religion wirklich eine gewisse relative Beseligung des in ihr Lebenden mit sich bringt, so ist das jedenfalls doch nur eine accidentelle Nebenwirkung, aber nicht der Zweck ihres Daseins; wer dieses Verhältniss auf den Kopf stellt und den individuellen Gefühlsgegniss, weichen das Individuum aus der Religion schöpft, an die Stelle ihres objectiven Zweckes setzt, der leiht damit der tiefsten Wurzel alles Bösen und Antireligiösen, der endämonistischen Selbstsucht, einen gefährlichsten Freibrief, der schädigt die Entwicklung der Religion durch Konservierung und Stärkung der ihr aus der heidnischen Vorstufe noch anhaftenden endämonistischen Verunstaltungen." In other words, religious development is not to stop with a self-conscious gratulation at the pleasant stirring of new forces, but is to gain its real satisfaction by complete expression in proper activity in life. The weak and womanish aspect that the Christian religion has sometimes assumed from the undue emphasis upon the emotional side, has been amply scored by Coe.² So far as the emotion gives the enthusiasm of high endeavor it is good; so far as it becomes mawkish sentimentality it is execrable.

Finally, what is the practical value of religious emotion in life? As we have seen, the tendency of the religious development is to take a man out from the narrow bounds of his limited personality and relate him to the whole of things. The universal tendencies are emphasized as against the more restricted; altruism is urged in the place of egoism; the more spiritual activities are recommended as against the lower animal impulses; and the realization of moral endeavor is guaranteed by the righteous power of God. This description, of course, applies to a highly developed sort of religious teaching. But some such striving after union with a higher power seems to be involved in all the forms. The self will always be a center

¹ Religious philosophie, Bd. II, s. 52.

² *Op. cit.*

of activity, but not necessarily the only center, nor the main one. If I might employ a figure, I should compare the frankly egoistic attitude toward life to a circle, where all radii lead to the "self-center." The social type of mind might be represented by an ellipse, wherein the interval between the foci represents the extent of the social or patriotic interests. The religious order would then be typified by a parabola, where the focus is still the ego, but the directrix reaches out into the infinite. This last figure cannot be said to be an exaggeration even as applied to primitive religions. For though savages may not have a very clear notion of infinity (such as our philosophers are blessed with), yet the outer limits of their system corresponds to this conception—as among all self-respecting peoples. Höffding has called religion the "cosmic vital" feeling. And that to my mind is the essence of the matter. "A man comes to realize the spirit that moves within him as a part of the whole. And a feeling of this vital oneness gives a certain peace and confidence which is religious in its nature if not in its form."¹ A man feels that his will is identified with God's will; that his plan is a part of God's plan. And such a feeling of *rapprochement* with the source of all power gives a man immense energy to suffer or to do. The religious emotion especially arouses the expansive manifestations of love, to which it is very much akin. And thus it leads to unselfish activity. The value of religion in enforcing morality and thus forming a strong social bond, has been generally acceded. The sense of living under the eye of an "ideal socius," or of existing as a part of God's very being, cannot help but have an exalting effect on a man's relations with his fellows. "En nous présentant la religion comme la lien unificateur par excellence ou la cause origénelle qui consolide et maintient le group social, nos prédécesseurs ne se trompèrent qu' à demi; car à la religion pour contenu essentiel ils donnèrent l'amour des hommes et l'amour divin, la forme la plus large et la plus pure de l'altruisme."²

¹ Stanley: Psychology of Religion, Psy. Rev., '98.

² Roberty: Le psychisme social, p. 47.